

What is claimed is:

1. An offset lithographic printing press comprising:
  - a) a first and second sidewall;
  - b) a plate cylinder;
  - c) a printing plate adapted to be wrapped around the surface of the plate cylinder, the printing plate having opposite ends;
  - d) a blanket cylinder having passages extending to an outer surface of the blanket cylinder;
  - e) a removable printing blanket mounted axially over the blanket cylinder, the printing blanket being tubular in shape;
  - f) a source of pressurized fluid coupled to the blanket cylinder, the source of fluid applying fluid to the blanket cylinder and through the passages to expand the removable printing blanket during installation and removal of the removable printing blanket;
  - g) said first sidewall having a movable portion to provide an opening in the first sidewall to enable the printing blanket to be slideably removed from the blanket cylinder when the portion of said the first sidewall is in the open position; and
  - h) the removable printing blanket comprising a rigid cylindrical inner layer; an outer printing layer for transferring an ink pattern to a web; and an intermediate compressible layer between said inner and outer layers; wherein the removable printing blanket has an outer circumferential surface and is radially expandable so as to enable the blanket to be axially mounted onto the blanket cylinder of the offset printing press.
2. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 1 further comprising a layer of inextendable material in the printing blanket.

3. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 1 further comprising an inextendable material disposed between the intermediate layer and outer layer of the printing blanket.

4. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 1 further comprising an inextendable material disposed in the intermediate layer of the printing blanket.

5. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 1 wherein the plate cylinder has an axially extending gap therein, and the opposite ends of the printing plate are mountable within the axially extending gap.

6. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 5 further comprising a layer of inextendable material in the printing blanket.

7. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 5 further comprising an inextendable material disposed between the intermediate layer and outer layer of the printing blanket.

8. The offset lithographic printing press as recited in claim 5 further comprising an inextendable material disposed in the intermediate layer of the printing blanket.